

REMARKS

This Reply is accompanied by a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114.

In view of the following remarks, favorable reconsideration of this application and allowance thereof is respectfully requested. Claims 1-13 stand finally rejected and are currently pending in this application. No new matter has been introduced.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 3, 4, 11 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,276,761 ("Beck") in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,432,210 ("Crouch"). Applicants respectfully traverse these claim rejections for the reasons set forth hereinafter.

As set forth in detail in the present application, Applicants' claimed invention is directed to embodiments of an electronic compressed air system for vehicles comprising a compressed air supply part having a compressor, a compressed air consumer part having load circuits forming an air-suspension circuit, and service-brake circuits having reservoirs. The load circuits are supplied with compressed air via solenoid valves. The solenoid valve of the air-suspension circuit does not include reservoirs and is closed in the de-energized normal state. The solenoid valves of the other load circuit are open in the de-energized normal state.

Beck describes embodiments of an air braking system having a compressor, an air consumer circuit, a first electrically actuable valve between the compressor and the consumer circuit, an auxiliary air circuit, and a second actuable valve between the compressor and the auxiliary circuit, wherein the auxiliary circuit is connected to the compressor via a non-return valve. In the event of an electrical failure, the auxiliary circuit can be arranged to supply air under pressure to the consumer circuit. The Examiner acknowledges that Beck does not disclose

electrically actuatable valves for supplying compressed air to the service-brake circuits that are in an open position in a de-energized normal state and relies on Crouch to cure this deficiency.

Crouch describes embodiments of a fluid-actuating brake system for railroad locomotives. The braking system is actuated by a reduction of pressure in a brake pipe in which a conventional automatic brake valve is replaced by manually actuated control that automatically causes a preselected reduction in the brake pipe line. The Examiner cites Crouch for its general disclosure of a vent valve (71) that is normally open. *See* Crouch at 5:55-59. Applicants respectfully submit that Crouch does not cure the severe deficiencies of Beck.

Crouch merely provides for a vent valve that is open in a de-energized normal state. The disclosure of an open vent valve in a de-energized normal state cannot properly be equated to electrically actuatable valves for supplying compressed air to service-brake circuits and a high pressure compressed air load circuit that are in an open position in a de-energized normal state. By utilizing a solenoid valve for an air suspension circuit that is closed in a de-energized normal state in conjunction with electrically actuatable valves for supplying compressed air to service-brake circuits and a high pressure compressed air load circuit that are in open position in the de-energized normal state, Applicants' present claimed invention eliminates the need for compressed air reservoirs for further compressed air load circuits. It is submitted that the general citation to Crouch for a vent valve that is open in a de-energized normal state, without the benefit of hindsight gleaned from Applicants' present application, would not provide motivation for one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Beck to provide electrically actuatable valves for supplying compressed air to service-brake circuits and a high pressure compressed air load circuit that are in open position in the de-energized normal state. Accordingly, Applicants submit that independent claim 1 of the present application recites

features and structure nowhere taught or suggested in the Beck and Crouch references, and, thus claim 1 is patentable over these references, whether taken alone or in combination. Notice to this effect is earnestly requested.

It is further submitted that dependent claims 3, 4, 11 and 13 are also allowable by virtue of their respective dependencies from independent claim 1, as well as for the additional steps and features recited therein. Notice to this effect is also earnestly requested.

The Examiner rejected dependent claims 2, 5-10 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Beck and Crouch in various combination with U.S. Patent No. 4,911,617 ("Buma I"); U.S. Patent No. 4,799,707 ("Buma II"); U.S. Patent No. 4,616,881 ("Müller"); and U.S. Patent No. 6,149,246 ("Terborn"). Applicants respectfully traverse these claim rejections for the reasons set forth hereinafter.

As an initial matter, Applicants respectfully submit that dependent claims 2, 5-10 and 12 are also allowable by virtue of their respective dependencies from independent claim 1. In addition, Buma I, Buma II, Müller and Terborn do not cure the severe deficiencies of Beck and Crouch as discussed above.

The Buma I patent cited by the Examiner in combination with Beck and Crouch against claims 2 and 12 describes embodiments of an air pressure circuit having a compressor that is divided into two chambers by a slidable piston. The Examiner cites Buma I for its general disclosure of an air suspension circuit and an air dryer disposed on the compressed air supply line.

The Buma II patent cited by the Examiner in combination with Beck and Crouch against claims 5 and 6 describes embodiments of an electronically controlled suspension system for controlling the body attitude of a vehicle having reserve tanks for holding compressed air for

delivery at start-up in order to decrease starting torque. The Examiner cites Buma II for its general disclosure of an electronic control device adapted to control a high pressure compressed air load circuit.

The Müller patent cited by the Examiner in combination with Beck and Crouch against claim 8 and in further combination with Terborn against claims 7-10 describes embodiments of a tractor-trailer braking system with a control valve for the trailer that is controllable by at least two service brake circuits of the tractor. The Examiner cites Müller for its general disclosure of secondary load circuits without compressed air reservoirs.

The Terborn patent cited by the Examiner in combination with Beck, Crouch and Müller against claims 7-10 describes embodiments of a compressed-air supply system having an air-suspension system and a brake system. The brake system is provided with a compressed-air tank connected to both the air-suspension system and brake system and dimensioned for air pressure greater than or equal to the air pressure demanded in the air-suspension system. The Examiner cites Terborn for its general disclosure of at least one secondary circuit having a lower pressure than service brake circuits.

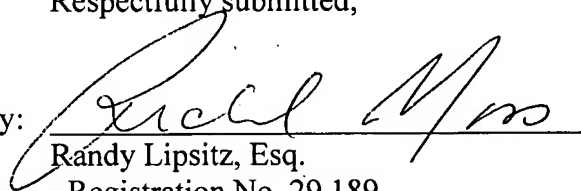
None of Buma I, Buma II, Müller and Terborn cures the deficiencies of Beck and Crouch as discussed above. Buma I, Buma II, Müller and Terborn do not teach or suggest that the electrically actuatable valves for supplying compressed air to the service-brake circuits are in open position in a de-energized normal state. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 2, 5-10 and 12 of the present application recite features and structure nowhere found in the Buma I, Buma II, Müller and Terborn references, and, thus claims 2, 5-10 and 12 are patentable over these references, whether taken alone or in combination. Notice to this effect is earnestly requested.

On the basis of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for immediate allowance, and notice to this effect is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorneys at the telephone number set forth below if it will advance the prosecution of this case.

No fee is believed due with this Response other than the \$810.00 fee for the RCE filed herewith. Please charge this fee and any fee deficiency and credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0540.

Respectfully submitted,

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